

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (original) A splicer mechanism for joining the tail of tape being fed from one roll to the leading edge of tape that will be fed from another roll, comprising:

- (a) a frame, defining a pathway along which tape travels as it is being fed;
- (b) a pair of arms each having a first end which is rotatably attached to said frame and a second end having a post projecting outwardly therefrom, one of said arms being located on each side of said pathway;
- (c) said arms being moveable between a first position where said posts are located proximate said pathway and a second position where said posts are located further away from said pathway, said arms being normally biased toward said second position;
- (d) a catch mechanism which holds said arms in said first position; and
- (e) a release mechanism which releases said catch mechanism when a portion of said tape containing a release indicia passes through said pathway, thereby allowing said arms to move to the second position.

Claim 2 (original) The splicer mechanism of claim 1 wherein said release indicia is a bulge placed in said tape and said release mechanism comprises a trigger element which said tape passes, said trigger element being arranged such that it is displaced when said bulge passes thereby.

Claim 3 (original) The splicer mechanism of claim 2 wherein said trigger element is mechanically linked to said catch mechanism.

Claim 4 (amended) The splicer mechanism of claim 2 wherein said trigger element activates a proximity switch which causes solenoids to release said ~~latch~~ catch mechanism.

Claim 5 (original) The splicer mechanism of claim 3 or 4 wherein said trigger element is a moveable roller.

Claim 6 (original) The splicer mechanism of claim 5 wherein said trigger element further comprises a fixed roller and said tape passes between said moveable roller and said fixed roller.

Claim 7 (original) The splicer mechanism of claim 1 wherein said release indicia is a segment of said tape which is optically distinguishable from the remainder of said tape and said release mechanism includes an optical reader which is configured to recognize said segment.

Claim 8 (amended) A method of joining the tail of tape being fed from one roll to the leading edge of tape which will be fed from another roll comprising:

- (a) providing the splicer mechanism of claim [[2]] 1 wherein said release indicia is a bulge placed in said tape and said release mechanism comprises a trigger element which said tape passes, said trigger element being arranged such that it is displaced when said bulge passes thereby;
- (b) placing said arms in the first position and engaging said catch mechanism;
- (c) providing a first roll of tape having a bulge located in its trailing edge;
- (d) feeding tape from said first roll along said pathway;
- (e) providing a second roll of tape;
- (f) looping the leading edge of the tape from the second roll around the post of one of said arms and back through the loop and tightening it to form a first slip knot around said post;
- (g) looping the leading edge of the tape from said second roll around the tape from the first roll and back through the loop to form a loose knot around the tape from the second roll;
- (h) looping the leading edge of the tape from said second roll around the post of the other arm and back through the loop and tightening it to form a second slip knot around said post;
- (i) so that when said bulge in the trailing edge of the tape from the first roll engages said trigger element to release said catch mechanism and allow said arms to start rotating toward the second

position, said loose knot is tightened onto said trailing edge of the tape from said first roll and said slip knots are pulled off of their respective posts.